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Western Region Dairy Goat News

This newsletter is the outreach component of the Western SARE grant that Deborah Giraud, Farm Advisor, was granted for a statewide conference, facilitating the producers association and a milk meter project. At present, this newsletter is a one-time collaboration, but could become a continued effort if producers, Extension and industry responds.

California Goat Milk Producers Conference

By Deborah Giraud, UC Farm Advisor—Humboldt County—ddgiraud@ucdavis.edu

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A statewide conference was held on May 15, 2008 in Merced. We had 11 speakers and 19 farms participated. It was a great day of sharing information and presenting topics useful to the producers. Dairy Farm Advisors around the state advertised the workshop to their clientele. A direct mail piece was sent to all known goat dairies and processors to distribute. We had three vets in attendance all day. UC Davis Specialists, Advisors and Industry Representatives from around the state spoke at the conference and helped during the day.

Prior to the conference, a survey for commercial goat milk producers was created and sent by mail to the statewide list. An email version of the survey announcement was forwarded to UC Cooperative Extension staff so they could help distribute it, and it was sent to producers to all the email addresses we have. The survey could also be taken online. A post conference evaluation was emailed to everyone who attended. Eight

evaluations were received with most of the ratings in the highest categories. About six calls were received from producers who did not attend asking for information. Several people interested in starting new operations have contacted us since the conference. The conference was funded by the USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program.

DVD available

A DVD was produced of the presentations and is available to interested producers. Two sets have already been sent to interested producers at no cost to them. Please email Deborah Giraud (ddgiraud@ucdavis.edu) or call 707-445-7351 to request your copy. All the presentations are on the three discs except the one about Humboldt County Goat Milk Producers Association, by Deborah Giraud. We ran out of room, and thought it was fairly local interest. However, Deborah presented to try to inspire others to create Associations. The presentation

is on the website <http://cehumboldt.ucdavis.edu> under livestock.

Mexican Professor

Shortly after the conference I got an email from a professor at an agricultural university



near Mexico City. He found our conference announcement on line. He works with the dairy goat industry there, and wanted to share information. He sent me some photos of their operations. The idea of having a student exchange or projects has been discussed. We are corresponding and he will be visiting California in fall 2009. If you are interested in having him visit or in any possible internships on your ranch, please let me know. ■

Funded by:



Resources

CALIFORNIA

There are many excellent resources available for goat milk producers. In California we formed a Dairy goat workgroup; the members are county Extension and campus based Specialists and faculty. You can find Extension folks at this web site <http://animalscience.ucdavis.edu/extension/index.htm> and just back up to find the faculty at the animal science home page. The emails of all contributors to this newsletter are listed next to their names. Other land grant universities have Extension home pages similar to these.

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USEFUL LINKS

<http://coststudies.ucdavis.edu>

search for goats

<http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu/>

search for goats

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/ceah/cei/bi/prcaevinfosheet.pdf>—May 2008 article from

USDA's Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service (APHIS) about CAEV

<http://pnwcheese.typepad.com>

Nitrate Poisoning: Watch Your Water and Feed Content

By Robert B. Moeller Jr. D.V.M.—California Animal Health & Food Safety Laboratory, University of California—rbmoeller@ucdavis.edu

A goat milk producer had 10 does die. The cause of death was identified as nitrate poisoning. Both the well water and feed they had grown had high nitrate levels. Nitrate toxicity in ruminants is a common toxicological problem. Most cases involve elevated nitrate levels in the feed however some cases can also involve elevated nitrate levels in water. The common causes of plant nitrate poisoning are oat and wheat hay that has been heavy fertilized as well as immature green oat, barley, wheat and rye. Sudan grass and corn can also cause nitrate poisoning particularly in drought stressed field. Turnip and sugar beet tops, and rape have also caused nitrate poisoning. Pigweed, lamb's quarter, kochia, mustard, puncture vine, and Russian thistle are also known to have high nitrate levels. Acute nitrate poisoning tends to occur in animals fed forages that exceed 1% (dry weight basis) or 10,000ppm nitrate. Feeds containing 0.40% nitrate are considered safe for most ruminants under all conditions. Feeds containing 0.40 to 0.66% nitrate in the ration are usually safe for nonpregnant animals but for pregnant ruminants this should be fed with caution since this level may cause abortions. Feeds containing more nitrate should be fed cautiously to all animals or diluted in a 50/50 mix with forages containing less nitrates. Pregnant animals should be fed no more than 0.2% nitrate in the ration to ensure that abortions do not occur. Water can also be a source of nitrate exposure. Nitrate in the water can act with the nitrate in the forage to cause an accumulative affect and poison ruminants. Waters with nitrate levels less than 50 ppm (0.005 ppm) are considered safe for all ruminants. 100 ppm (0.01%) nitrate may cause problems in some animals.

However as water nitrate levels get higher there is more danger of problems occurring. Water levels with nitrate levels greater than 800 ppm (0.08%) can be considered toxic to all ruminants and should be avoided. Ruminants (sheep, goats and cattle) are more susceptible to nitrate poisoning than non-ruminant species (horses, swine and adult humans). The reason for ruminant sensitivity is due to the rumenal microbes rapidly converting nitrate to nitrite which then causes the toxicity in the animal. Non-ruminants are converting the nitrates to nitrites in the digestive tract much more slowly which makes them more resistant to poisoning. In order to prevent problems in your herd or flock testing of possible forages that may contain high nitrates and ensuring that your well cannot be contaminated with nitrate runoff is the only way to prevent such a problem. ■



FDA Revokes Order Prohibiting Extra Label Use of Cephalosporin

By Center for Veterinary Medicine, U.S. Food & Drug Administration

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is revoking the order prohibiting the extralabel use of cephalosporin antimicrobial drugs in food-producing animals. The agency is taking this action today so that it may fully consider the many substantive comments it received on the order of prohibition.

The order, which was to take effect on November 30, 2008, would have changed 21 CFR 530.41 to list cephalosporins as prohibited from extralabel use in food-producing animals. It was originally announced in the Federal Register on July 3, 2008 with a 60-day comment period and a 90-day effective date for the final rule; however, on August 18, 2008, the

agency extended the comment period to November 1 to allow adequate time for interested persons to submit comments, thus delaying the implementation of the rule until November 30, 2008.

The agency received many substantive comments on the order of prohibition, and therefore, in order for FDA to fully consider the comments, the agency has decided to revoke the order. As a result, the order of prohibition will not take effect on November 30, 2008. Neither the order nor the change to § 530.41 that would have listed cephalosporins as prohibited from extralabel use will take effect on November 30, 2008. If, after considering the comments and other

relevant information, FDA decides to issue another order of prohibition addressing this matter, FDA will follow the procedures in 21 CFR 530.25 that provide for a public comment period prior to implementing the order.

For additional information, please see Cephalosporin Order of Prohibition: Questions and Answers and the Federal Register Notice.
<http://www.fda.gov/cvm/RevokesProCepha.htm>

Information provided by Joan D. Rowe, DMV, PhD—Associate Professor, School of Veterinary Medicine, UC Davis. ■

Bacterial Abortions of Sheep and Goats

By Robert B. Moeller Jr. D.V.M.—California Animal Health & Food Safety Laboratory, University of California—rbmoeller@ucdavis.edu

Abortions can cause serious economic losses to both sheep and goat producers in California and the United States. When an abortion occurs in your flock or herd it is very important to quickly identify the cause before your facility suffers severe losses. While finding a few animals aborting each year is not unusual, the finding of large numbers of animals aborting - sometimes referred to as an abortion “storm”- should be of concern. Abortion rates normally run less than 4%. Abortion rates greater than 10% should be considered an emergency and thoroughly investigated. Examination of the fetal and placental tissues by your veterinarian and your regional veterinary diagnostic laboratory will assist you in identifying the cause of the abortion.

Examination of the placenta for abnormalities is very important. Many bacterial abortions have placental damage followed by infection in the fetus.

Placental damage involving both the cotyledons and intercotyledonary spaces (structures important for fetal and maternal blood contact) often suggests a bacterial agent. Consequently, it is very important that the placenta be submitted with the fetus for a complete pathological exam.

Although sheep and goats are two completely different species of animals, they both tend to be affected by similar bacterial agents that contribute significantly to abortions. The most common bacterial agents to cause abortions in small ruminants worldwide are *Chlamydia* (Chlamydia), *Campylobacter*, *Coxiella*, *Brucella*, and *Listeria*. Knowing how these bacterial agents infect your animals may assist you in preventing serious economic losses in your herd or flock.

Chlamydia (Chlamydia) abortus is the cause of ovine enzootic abortions. This organism is a major bacterial agent

responsible for abortions in both sheep and goats. Affected animals tend to abort during the last trimester of gestation (6 to 8 weeks prior to birth) or deliver stillborn or weak non-viable neonates (young lambs or kids). The affected doe or ewe rarely demonstrates any illness prior to the abortion. Does and ewes become infected by oral ingestion of the bacteria in contaminated feces or infected fetal (usually placental) tissues and fluids. Once ingested, the bacteria colonize the intestinal lining of the animal and spread systemically through the blood to the uterus and ultimately the placenta and fetus. The identification of this agent in fetal and placental tissues is accomplished by using special procedures involving fluorescent antibody and immunohistochemical techniques. Owners need to take care when handling fetal tissues since this agent can infect people and make some people sick.

Bacterial Abortions of Sheep and Goats (continued)

Campylobacter (*Vibrio*) bacteria are a serious cause of abortion in sheep. Goats are more resistant to Campylobacter infections resulting in fewer abortions. Three species of Campylobacter tend to cause most infections: these organisms are Campylobacter fetus, Campylobacter jejuni and Campylobacter lari. Campylobacter infections most often cause late term abortions, stillbirths, or the birth of weak non-viable lambs. Ewes rarely show clinical signs of being sick prior to aborting but some animals may have a vaginal discharge suggestive of a uterine infection after aborting. Occasionally these animals may die from complications due to the uterine infection. Susceptible animals become infected by oral ingestion of Campylobacter contaminated feces in feed or water. The bacteria first colonize the intestines of the pregnant adult animal. The bacteria then spread to the uterus and placenta via the blood stream causing an infection of the placenta and fetus. The diagnosis of a Campylobacter infection is completed by gross and microscopic examination of the placental and fetal tissues and bacterial isolation. Vaccines are available for use in flocks to prevent this disease. Unfortunately, once an outbreak has occurred, it is often too late to vaccinate since infected animals have already been shedding the bacteria in the feces for some time and most likely have infected many other herd members. Consequently, the herd must be vaccinated prior to exposure (before the next breeding season) to prevent infections and abortions.

Coxiella burnetii is a bacterial agent that can cause serious abortion storms in sheep and goats. This agent also can infect many species of animals and is known to cause a serious disease in man called "Q" fever. Abortions tend to occur in young animals that have not been exposed to the bacteria. Both aborting and non-aborting animals can shed the bacteria in feces for several days prior to aborting and for weeks after

aborting. The organism can also be found in milk and uterine discharge. *Coxiella* infections often cause late term abortions (6 to 8 weeks prior to birth), stillbirths and the birth of weak non-viable neonates that only survive for several days. Infected females are rarely sick but some animals may develop a severe uterine infection lasting weeks to several months with organisms present in the uterine discharge. Young, pregnant, naïve (not previously exposed) animals become infected by oral ingestion of the bacteria. The licking of *Coxiella* contaminated uterine discharges and fetal fluids and the ingestion of contaminated feed and bedding are the common sources of infection. Like the other two previously discussed bacteria, placental infections lead to fetal infections and death. The placenta is critical for the identification of this organism and needs to be submitted with the fetus for examination since the bacteria cannot be cultured by standard routine culture techniques. It should be remembered that this organism can be shed in the milk of sheep and goats for a prolonged period of time. This makes it easy for people to become infected when drinking unpasteurized milk products. In addition to the ingestion of milk, handling infected placental tissues can also cause people to become infected.

There are two principal species of *Brucella* that infect sheep and goats. These are *Brucella ovis* (infections in sheep) and *Brucella melitensis* (infections in sheep and goats). *Brucella ovis* tends to be a ram disease causing orchitis and epididymitis (swollen testicles). However, ewes can become infected resulting in early embryonic death of the fetus (less than 4 weeks after conception) and repeat breeding. *Brucella ovis* infections are routinely seen in the United States. *Brucella melitensis* infections are very rare in the United States; however infections tend to be a serious disease concern. Animals often become infected with this

organism by the introduction of an infected animal into the naïve herd or flock. Infected carrier animals will shed the bacteria in the uterine discharge and placenta after parturition (giving birth). Other animals become infected by oral ingestion of uterine discharges and the placenta tissues or ingestion of contaminated feed and bedding. Infected animals develop a systemic (whole body) infection with the bacteria localizing in the placenta and infecting the fetus with a severe systemic disease and bacterial bronchopneumonia. Abortion storms tend to occur during the last trimester (6 weeks) of gestation. Stillbirths and the birth of weak non-viable neonates is also a common finding. Diagnosis of brucella infections is completed by isolation of the bacteria from placental and fetal tissues. You must be very concerned about getting *Brucella melitensis* into your herd or flock because this is a serious disease that not only infects your animals but can also infect people. People infected with the bacteria often develop a serious chronic disease leading to many complications. If living in regions where this disease is endemic, it is important to ensure that infected animals are not introduced into the herd. Replacement animals should be purchased from brucella free regions. Special serologic tests (test done on blood samples) on new breeding stock can be completed prior to the introduction of the new animals into your flock or herd to ensure that the new animals are free of this disease.

Listeria infections in sheep and goats are caused by two organisms, *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Listeria ivanovii*. Infections by these bacteria tend to occur in temperate regions of the world and are often a problem usually between December and May. The feeding of poor quality or spoiled silage (pH>5.0) is often the most common source of infections leading to abortion storms. (*continues*)

Bacterial Abortions of Sheep and Goats (continued)

However, range animals and animals fed hay have also been known to become infected. After ingestion of the bacteria, infection of the blood stream develops within 24 hours followed rapidly by invasion of the placenta and fetus. Infected fetuses are often aborted 7 to 10 days after infection. Affected does or ewes may develop a fever with depression prior to the abortion. Affected fetuses are usually mid to late gestation with most aborted fetuses around 12 weeks gestation. Stillbirths and the birth of weak non-viable neonates are common. Affected dams may develop a severe uterine infection for up to three weeks after the abortion with large numbers of the bacteria present in the uterine discharge. Like the other bacteria, placental and fetal examination, along with bacterial cultures and special diagnostic procedures, will aid in the identification of this organism.

Other bacteria are also known to cause abortions. However, most of these are considered to be individual animal problems and are often associated with a bacterial septicemia (a condition where many tissues or organs are affected by the infection) in the dam. The lesions seen in the fetus infected with these minor bacterial agents are often indistinguishable from those bacteria already discussed. These bacteria must be differentiated from each other by bacteriological cultures and special laboratory techniques that are usually performed by your regional veterinary diagnostic laboratory.

An abortion storm requires you to take important steps to control the problem. All dead fetuses and placental tissues should be removed immediately from the area and disposed in a manner that will preclude further contamination of the environment. Affected dams, along with animals that have a vaginal discharge, should be isolated from the remainder of the pregnant animals to prevent further exposure. No new animals should be

placed in the affected area until all bedding is removed and the surfaces cleaned and disinfected. Pregnant animals should not be fed on the ground which can lead to feed becoming contaminated with infected fecal material, fetal fluids and fetal tissues. Water troughs should be cleaned daily to prevent fecal material contamination. In range herds or flocks, restricting infected animals from streams may be advisable particularly if other animals have access to this water downstream. New animals to be added to the herd or flock should be quarantined for at least 14 days prior to introduction into the herd and checked regularly for signs of illness. All new animals should also be purchased from breeders with animals that have not experienced an abortion storm. If you live in an area where brucella is endemic, serology on newly purchased males and females should be completed to ensure that the animals are serologically negative for brucella prior to introduction into your herd or flock.

In order to prevent future abortion storms, the agent responsible must be identified. Both fetal and placental tissues should be submitted to your veterinarian or regional veterinary diagnostic laboratory for further diagnostic workup. If the bacterial agent is identified and a vaccine is available (*Chlamydophila* and *Campylobacter*), one should plan on vaccinating the herd prior to the next breeding season.

Finally, remember that most of the bacteria responsible for abortions in sheep and goats can also cause diseases in people. When handling fetal and placental tissues and working with uterine discharges from either aborted animals or animals that have live, healthy offspring, always wear disposable gloves and wash hands to prevent possible exposure to these agents. Consuming raw (unpasteurized) milk is another way that people can become

infected with these and other disease causing bacteria. Milk for home use should always be heat treated or pasteurized before drinking. Careful attention to hygiene and sanitation can reduce the risk of spreading bacterial diseases within your herd or flock, and also will decrease the danger of these bacteria infecting you, your employees or your family. ■

Results of the California Commercial Goat Milk Producers Survey 2008

Results found that those surveyed were most interested in learning about:

- Marketing
- Out of season breeding
- How to stop government from demanding that goats conform to all cow rules and regulations
- Increasing the basic health of a commercial herd
- DHIA testing
- Regulations for milk barns
- Organic milk
- Ways to improve goat health
- Best goat software
- Tips on raising kids (best practices)
- Disease control (CAE, CL)
- Nutrition
- Off season breeding

Results found that those surveyed were most concerned about the following issues to improve their operation:

- Marketing
- Sales of extra milk goats
- How to stop government from demanding that goats conform to all cow rules and regulations
- Kid nutrition
- Nutrition at 1 year, 3 years, 5 years +
- Testing milk on site
- Profitability

Interpreting Your Forage Test Report

By P.H. Robinson, PhD—Cooperative Extension Specialist, University of California, Davis—PHRobinson@UCDavis.Edu

Many California laboratories participate in the California Hay Testing Consortium, which is sponsored by the University of California to increase the consistency and quality of forage testing in California. There may be changes in forage test reports from time to time as labs throughout the state continually upgrade their methods to provide greater consistency in their lab results. Labs participating in the California Hay Testing Consortium use methods recommended by the Association of Official Analytical Chemists (AOAC) or the National Forage Testing Association (NFTA) for DM, CP, NDF and ADF. Traditional 'wet' chemical procedures and Near Infrared Spectroscopy (NIR) methods are currently approved by both AOAC and NFTA. The following information will assist you in interpreting forage test results.

IMPORTANCE OF SAMPLING

Analytical results are meaningless if the forage sample submitted to the laboratory did not represent the lot of hay. Often the greatest source of inconsistency in forage test results is poor sampling procedures. A minimum of 20 randomly selected cores per lot is recommended for sampling hay, where a 'lot' consists of hay of one variety from one cutting from the same field. A sharp bore, 3/8" to 5/8", sampler should be used. The pooled sample, representing all core samples, should be stored and shipped under cool conditions in zip-lock bags.

MEANING OF THE TEST VALUES

Forage test reports contain a number of measured and calculated values. Interpretation of these values can be confusing. The definitions that follow describe the most commonly reported lab values.

Measured Laboratory Values

Dry Matter (DM) – This value is used for calculating the nutrient content of hay

on a DM basis. It can also be used to determine the amount of water in the hay as: $100 - \%DM$. Hay will tend to mold as the %DM falls below 80% and at values above 90% it becomes brittle, is more susceptible to leaf loss, and is less palatable to goats.

Crude Protein (CP) - CP is estimated from the nitrogen content of the forage based upon the observation that the nitrogen content of protein averages 16%. Protein is important in goat nutrition as it provides essential nutrients for both the rumen microbes as well as the animal itself.

Neutral Detergent Fiber (NDF) - NDF consists of the slowly digested hemicellulose and cellulose as well as indigestible lignin in the plant. As such, it estimates the structural carbohydrate in the forage, which is important in goat nutrition to both estimate feed intake (i.e., as the total diet NDF level increases above about 35% of DM, its voluntary feed intake tends to decline) and predict the susceptibility of the goats fed the diet to stomach upsets such as acidosis (i.e., as the total diet NDF level declines below about 27% of DM, the tendency to stomach upsets increases).

Acid Detergent Fiber (ADF) - ADF is a sub-fraction of NDF, but only consists of cellulose and lignin. ADF has been widely used as a predictor of the energy value of forages because the proportion of lignin, which is indigestible, is higher in ADF than it is in NDF.

Calculated Values

Forage energy estimates, that are used by farmers and nutritionists, are calculated from the measured values that were discussed above. As energy is not an analyzable forage fraction, there are a number of equations used to estimate a number of different energy values of forages. Fortunately these equations have been standardized among California laboratories. The most commonly

reported energy values follow.

Total Digestible Nutrients (TDN) - TDN estimates the proportion of the forage that can be digested. Although the definition of TDN has changed slightly over the years with advances in forage



testing procedures, it is currently accepted to equal the sum of digestible CP, digestible fat (multiplied by 2.25), digestible non-structural carbohydrate, and digestible NDF corrected for an energy cost of digestion generally accepted to be about 7 percentage units. TDN is often used as an estimate of the energy value of forage and can be used in ration formulation.

Digestible Energy (DE) - DE estimates the energy in a forage that is not lost in feces. DE, in Mcal/kg of DM, is generally calculated from TDN as: $0.04409 \times TDN$. However DE is seldom used in balancing rations.

Metabolizable Energy (ME) - ME estimates the energy in forage that is not lost in feces, urine, or rumen gases. ME, in Mcal/kg of DM, is generally calculated from DE as: $(1.01 \times DE) - 0.45$. ME is sometimes used in balancing rations.

Net Energy for Lactation (NEL) - NEL estimates the energy in forage that is available to support energy needs for body maintenance, lactation, and body weight gain. NEL, in Mcal/kg of DM, is generally calculated from TDN as: $(0.0245 \times TDN) - 0.12$. NEL is sometimes used in balancing rations.

Interpreting Your Forage Test Report (continued)

Net Energy for Maintenance (NEm) and Net Energy for Gain (NEg) -

NEm estimates the proportion of ME in forage that is available to support maintenance energy needs. NEm, in Mcal/kg of DM, is generally calculated from ME as: $(1.37 \times \text{ME}) - (0.138 \times \text{ME}^2) - (0.0105 \times \text{ME}^3) - 1.12$. In contrast, NEg estimates the proportion of ME in forage that is available to support energy needs for growth. NEg, in Mcal/kg of DM, is generally calculated from ME as: $(1.42 \times \text{ME}) - (0.174 \times \text{ME}^2) - (0.0122 \times \text{ME}^3) - 1.65$. NEm and NEg can be used to balance rations for growing goats. All energy values calculated in Mcal/kg of DM can be converted to Mcal/lb of DM by multiplying them by 0.4537.

REPORTING

Most values in a forage test report will probably be reported on an 'As Received', '90% DM', and/or '100% DM' basis. For most comparisons, the '100% DM' basis values are the most useful and will

probably be highlighted on the forage test report. However, many hay growers and buyers are accustomed to looking at the '90% DM' values for comparing hay lots.

INTERPRETATION

It is generally recommended that forage test values at '100% DM' be used when comparing hay lots. ADF is an important assay as it is often used to predict the energy value of the hay. However nutritionists are using NDF much more often than in the past, making it a good idea to become familiar with its normal range within forage types. CP is also an important value to be familiar with as it contributes to the forage energy value, as well as helping to meet the goats' nutritional requirements for protein.

None of the values reported on your forage test report, either measured or calculated, should be considered to be absolute. Often laboratories will report an 'error range' with each assayed value to

represent the laboratory error of that value. Normal lab variation, not including errors associated with poor sampling of forages, are considered to be: CP (+/- 0.5), NDF (+/- 0.9), ADF (+/- 0.7) and TDN (+/- 0.7) percentage points. Thus a reported value of 20% CP could actually be anywhere between 19.5 and 20.5%, although most values will cluster around 20%.

CONCLUSIONS

Laboratory assays can provide an accurate guide to the potential nutritional value of hay. However, always visually inspect lots of forage to assess the presence of molds, noxious weeds or other defects that will not be determined by laboratory assays.

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The California Artisan Cheese Guild is Committed to Success

By Lynne Devereux—Lynne@buttercommunications.com



Now it's fourth year, the California Artisan Cheese Guild continues to sharpen its focus on education. With a mission to support the on-going education of cheesemakers and consumers, the Guild structure includes committees with the purpose of carrying out first-rate educational programs.

The Cheesemaker Education Committee seeks specialists in topics that serve the needs of California cheesemakers. Recent programs have included seminars on cheese ripening and aging room environments and basic cheesemaking

science in Spanish. The Events Committee selects consumer and trade events that provide opportunities to educate consumers about the variety and quality of cheeses produced by Guild member cheesemakers. The Guild Communications Committee's monthly newsletter, *Cheese Wrap*, builds communications by highlighting industry news and Guild accomplishments.

The Guild website, www.cacheeseguild.org, illustrates the Guild brand, lists Guild cheesemaker information and contacts, and provides a "members only" networking option. For the first time, the California Artisan Cheese Guild brings together

cheese producers of all milks, throughout the state, and with a singular, quality brand, "California."

Guild membership currently numbers over 100. Cheesemakers, retailers, trade professionals, chefs and cheese enthusiasts, all committed to a sustainable artisan cheese community in California and beyond. The Guild's immediate goals are to bring expert educational programs that are convenient and affordable to our member cheesemakers. At the same time, we continue to build the network of cheese community here in our state and to engage the enthusiasm of our members in support of California artisan cheese. ■

Advocating for a Better Future

By Donald J. Klingborg—DVM Associate Dean for Extension & Public Programs
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The country's budget woes are likely to further impact the already depleted university research and outreach capacity associated with all but the major livestock and poultry commodities. While the commitment to address issues and concerns related to dairy goats (and a number of other species) remains strong in most Land Grant universities and many others in the west, rapidly shrinking budgets have forced difficult and unwanted decisions resulting in fewer campus and county-based academics with responsibilities to serve the goat industry.

In California we're very lucky to have the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory, instructional faculty and others all of whom go beyond their specific assignments to help fill voids that have been increasing since the budget cuts of the early 1990's. I'm sure that's the same in other states as well. Please know, however, that the critical mass of expertise necessary to support viable extension research and outreach programs for goats is already

lacking. Our program, and perhaps those in your area, have successfully patched together good and knowledgeable people to continue to provide goat enthusiasts some minimum level of support, however the current budget climate threatens to make it more difficult to meet tomorrow's needs.

The good news is that you can do something about this problem. The answer lies in the quote "*all politics is local*". This quote is attributed to "Tip" O'Neill's (former speaker of the US House of Representatives) father when Dad pointed out that son "Tip" lost the race for city council because "Tip" did not campaign in his own neighborhood. Your state representatives (in California those are your elected State Assembly and Senate members) need to hear from you if you want your university Cooperative Extension program to continue to do research and present education about goats. Our legislators are making hard decisions about important issues. Cooperative Extension, the Land Grant mission and the

Agriculture Experiment Station serve the goat industry well but can easily be lost among the crisis associated with our economy. If you don't speak out for those services you value they will be eliminated.

Contact your County Advisor/Agent for more information about how to send a strong message to your politicians about the value of research and education. Politicians listen to their local constituents much more than they listen to outsiders. Thankfully the future is in your hands and you can change the course of history by maintaining and increasing investments in the areas that are important to you. Without your action there will likely be a steady decrease in the university's capacity to serve you with research solutions and educational programs that are relevant to your local needs. "*All politics is local*", and your local effort, or lack of effort, will be the difference between today's programs and future programs supporting dairy goats in your state. It's up to you. ■

Oregon's Goat Dairies Make Great Cheese

By Tami Parr—President, Oregon Cheese Guild—tamiparr@gmail.com

Oregon's goat dairies are hard at work making artisan cheese! The Oregon Cheese Guild, the umbrella organization for the state's cheesemakers, boasts eight goat dairy members, over half of the total membership. From the high desert of Central Oregon to the Oregon Coast to Southern Oregon, these goat dairies are helping to put the state on the map as a national center of outstanding artisan cheesemaking.

Several of Oregon's goat's milk cheesemakers won awards at the 2008 American Dairy Goat Association cheese competition. Pat Morford of Rivers Edge Chèvre won awards for two of her cheeses: Sunset Bay, a mold ripened cheese with a streak of smoked paprika, and Up in Smoke, a delicious smoked chèvre. Jan and

Larry Nielsen of Fraga Farm received an award for Rio Santiam, an aged cheese developed with Argentinean cheesemaker Mariano Battro. Up and coming Oregon cheesemaker Laurie Carlson also won two awards in the Amateur division – she's currently in the final stages of startup and hopes to become officially licensed as a cheesemaker in 2009.

All of these great goat's milk cheeses and more will be highlighted at the Fifth Annual Oregon Cheese Festival, an artisan cheese extravaganza being held March 13 & 14th at Rogue Creamery in Central Point, Oregon. Festival events include a sumptuous four course dinner on Friday night developed to showcase the state's cheesemakers and their cheeses. On Saturday March 14th, a farmer's market style celebration offering attendees

the opportunity to taste, sample and buy Oregon made artisan cheeses as well as wine and other regional artisan made products.

Also of interest: on February 21, 2009, the Northwest Dairy Goat Association held its annual conference at Clackamas Community College in Oregon City, Oregon. Presenters include Gianacis Caldwell of Pholia Farm in Rogue River, Oregon, who will speak about adding value to goat farming by making cheese. Plan ahead for next year's conference!

For more information about the Oregon Cheese Guild and its members see the website at oregoncheeseguild.org. ■

Capricopia—The ADGA Conference Fall 2008

By Steve Consadine—Redwood Hills Creamery, Sebastopol, CA—sartyrknit@yahoo.com

In the Olympics of ADGA Conventions, Capricopia set new performance heights for Redwood Empire Dairy Goat Association and dairy goat enthusiasts from Monterey Bay to Mt. Shasta. There are ten essential components to the PERFECT TEN!

1. Local Volunteer Support: Nowhere was this component more clearly demonstrated than on Day 2 (Animal Placement) of the TC in Petaluma. Twelve handlers were needed at all times, but twenty four were always on hand so that no handler experienced ring fatigue. Forty four animals were needed to make classes; eighty were on site. Once again when the time came, REDGAites turned out en masse. Thank you all!

2. Attendees: Over 470 appeared on the official roster. Forty seven youth registrants is a new record within ADGA. And it just continued all week, even with seven lines of programming and activities occurring at one time! Six foreign countries were represented: Vietnam, Israel, Africa, France, England, Quebec and Mexico.

3. Facility: The spacious elegance of the Doubletree wowed all those attendees from the moment they entered the grand foyer. The warm chocolate chip cookies even made them forget the room rate

4. Support Staff: Approximately eight key hotel department managers met with us before the event began and announced that

the anticipated sellout crowd was going to “Make their October books” in a hard sell economic period for most hotels. They gave us the magic numbers “62”, which could be punched at anytime, on any white house phone, and within five minutes we had whatever we needed, wanted or desired. This was their pledge of perfect “10” service. By the end of the week, they liked us so well that they wanted us to come back right away in 2009.

5. Programming: Lauren Acton’s feature presentation, “Under the Skin” comparing an actual goat skeleton to a living goat, drew the largest crowd in recent Type Conference history. Workshops were often the largest in convention history. No speaker would leave feeling unheard.

6. Tours: Safari West was a huge hit with the younger crowd. Two buses were filled to capacity for the Redwood Hill Creamery and Farm tours. Madonna, the driver, got into it and even added the bonus stretch of Patrick Amiot sculptures on Florence Avenue in Sebastopol.

7. Food: The only complaint about the food was the price, but once the whiners started eating even that ceased! One attendee at the Wine and Cheese said it was right up there with the French reception at Tours during the 2000 International Goat Conference featuring every regional goat’s milk cheese of France. Another simply said, “Magical!” Best Friday night banquet food in history! Even,

the hospitality room was a bottomless cornucopia of treats.

8. Entertainment: Some are convinced a karaoke night is a must for all future conventions. Richter’s hat was passed, filled and the KJ just kept on going. Friday there were hats galore, including several renditions of the Mad Hatter his/herself. Frobeck lived up to its billing for the diehard crowd who boogied until the coach turned into a pumpkin. For sheer drama, little could match the bidding run on the next to last Spotlight nominee who came in high and ran fast to \$5700 and sold, before anyone could catch their breath.

9. Sponsors/Vendors: Once word got around via the website, they kept signing up, even if they were too late to be in the program. And it wasn’t just a few measly goat pellets worth of support either. Major bucks (bad pun intended) came in from Meyenberg Goat Milk Products (a first in convention history) and Cal Expo (host for 2009 National Show).

10. Weather: Picture perfect from start to finish, with the heat turned on just in time for the outdoor patio wine and cheese party and the fog rolling in Sunday morning to keep it cool for final cleanup of the Spotlight tent and area. The consensus of departing weary conventioners was that one more time REDGA had partied them onto the floor and that it was the best ADGA Convention ever! ■

Foot Problems in Goats

By Steven L. Berry, DVM, MPVM—UCCE Dairy Management & Health Specialist, UC Davis—SLBerry@UCDavis.Edu

Steven L. Berry has worked on cattle foot problems for many years. We asked him to look at goat foot problems in our wetter areas of northern California. The problems we saw were due to hoof overgrowth and injury due to wet and dirty environments which has caused lameness. We sent samples to a veterinary diagnostic lab to check for goat footrot bacteria but did not find infectious pathogens, just environmental bacteria.

Trimming away hoof material he demonstrated how to get to the root of the problem. The only way to clear up a bad foot is to remove the dead and diseased tissue, allowing drainage and the hoof and soft tissues to regrow. Some producers with many years experience commented that they probably weren’t cutting away enough on these problem feet. If an infection starts at the white line and works its way up the wall breaking out on the coronary band, the side of the hoof needs to be opened up for

drainage and healing to occur. Wrapping the foot for a few days after trimming away bad tissue might be helpful but the bandage should be removed in 1-5 days. Goats with serious hoof lesions may not recover and might need to be culled. Prevention is the key and is accomplished by preventive trimming and clean, dry environments. Checking the goats often will help to detect early lesions which have a better prognosis for cure than chronic lesions. ■

Report from WA State

By Susan R. Kerr, DVM, PhD, PAS—WSU-Klickitat County Extension Director—SusanK@co.klickitat.wa.us

The Washington State goat inventory continues to change with the times. Statistics from the National Agricultural Statistics Service reveal that milk goat numbers decreased from 8,300 in 2008 to 7,100 in 2009.

However, meat goat numbers increased from 23,000 to 27,000 during that time span. The Angora goat inventory held steady at 1,000 head.¹

There were 2,762 sheep and goat farms in Washington State in 2007; the value of their products sold totaled \$6,738,000.²

Breed- and purpose-specific goat associations are numerous in the Northwest, including Washington State. Examples include the Northwest Cashmere Association, Cascade Boer Goat Association, Oregon Meat Goat Producers, Northwest Oregon Dairy Goat Association,

Cascade Pygmy Goat Association, Columbia Basin Goat Guild and many, many more.

These associations and/or their members sponsor high-quality educational events such as the Northwest Oregon Dairy Goat Association Annual Conference, the Oregon Flock and Fiber Festival and the Black Sheep Gathering.

New Grade A goat dairies have been licensed by the Washington State Department of Agriculture in the last few years; demand for goat milk far exceeds supply. Although their numbers are expanding, meat goat producers are struggling for profitability due to high overhead and input costs, distance from consumers and marketing issues.

Northwest fiber goat enthusiasts remain a small but dedicated group with similar expense and marketing challenges. Interest

in pack and harness goats is growing slowly but steadily, as indicated by the addition of classes for such entries at county and state fairs in the northwest.

There is at least one commercial goat grazer in Washington who charges clients for using his goats for weed and brush control.

Due to their size, disposition and versatility, the Washington State 4-H goat project continues to grow as well. Hopefully these young producers will continue to be involved in the goat industry and help ensure its success far into the future.

1. National Agricultural Statistics Service, Jan. 2009.

2. www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007
<<http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007>> ■

News from Utah State University

By Allen Young—Associate Professor and Dairy Extension Specialist, Utah State University—allen.young@usu.edu

The dairy goat industry in Utah is not organized into a discrete group. My rough estimate is that the number of dairy goats is in the thousands, but how many dairies that includes is not known. Judging from the number of requests I am receiving, the numbers are increasing and becoming a large enough industry that I am planning some Extension programming for them. We have a milk processing plant west of Salt Lake City and many of the producers send some or all of their milk to that entity. We have a

couple of other commercial plants that have come and gone. The bulk of the dairy industry is farmstead cheese and specialty products such as goat soap that can be sold to neighbors, on-line (internet) or at farmers' markets. I see the numbers continuing to grow in the future.

I have been contracted to provide dairy extension programming for Nevada, Montana and Wyoming. However, I have not yet interacted with any goat dairies in

those states. I think this newsletter is a great way for me to work with this group at a higher level. I would be more than happy to distribute it to as many people as I know and use them to expand the mailing list. Please consider me a contact if you need one in Utah or some other the other states I work with.

Producers: please send me your goat farm information so I can get my mailing list up to date. ■

Goats to be Counted in Next Special Goat Census

By Maggy Herbelin

Conducted every five years by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (2007 and 2012), the Ag Census is a complete count of the nation's farms and ranches and the people who operate them. Policy-makers use Census data for decisions concerning agricultural and rural programs.

Community planners use Census information to target delivery of local services. Companies rely on Census data when determining where to locate their operations. Farmers themselves look at Census data when deciding to make changes in their production strategies. In addition to the Ag Census, there are

industry specific counts done periodically. **Goat producers will be surveyed this summer.** Bob Tratz at the NASDA office in Sacramento is the Survey Group leader. It will be asking questions about milk, meat and wool. Please help them get an accurate picture of the goat industry by filling out the survey by the deadline.

